

The LPGA Drive On Championship

Wednesday, October 21, 2020

Greensboro, Georgia, USA

Reynolds Lake Oconee

Danielle Kang

Press Conference

THE MODERATOR: Hi, everyone welcome back to another LPGA virtual pre-tournament press conference. In a few seconds we'll be speaking with California native and winner of the first ever LPGA DriveOn championship, Danielle Kang.

Danielle, thank you so, so much for taking the time to speak with us, especially because yesterday was your special birthday. Happy belated birthday. How did you celebrate despite this crazy COVID world we live in?

DANIELLE KANG: To be honest, it's been a hell of a travel day. I can't really say that, but I had to wake up at 4:30, take a flight out here. I did get to eat a brief breakfast with my family, which was good. I got here as soon as I could and had a sponsor thing on Monday. I had to fly, but it was fun. All good. I made it here and the LPGA testing waited for me, which was really nice of them.

I got to play nine holes, late nine holes, and had some cake and went to sleep.

THE MODERATOR: And given that it is the second Drive On Championship, especially now, are you thinking back to that moment at all, that time when you one at Inverness Club?

DANIELLE KANG: Not really, to be honest, because I don't see it as the same tournament. I know that it's a Drive On Championship, but normally when we go back to the tournaments that I've won or we have been to it's defending a title or playing on the same golf course. This feels like a new event for me because I don't know the golf course, first time I've been here.

I've got lost around the area at least two or three times.

THE MODERATOR: Because the lake is so large.

DANIELLE KANG: It is so large, and I keep taking the wrong turn and I go, No. Yeah.



THE MODERATOR: Luckily you didn't drive at night.

DANIELLE KANG: I did. Tried to go back yesterday to my accommodation and I got lost, and I think I just sat on the side of the road and I was thinking, Why are my options not working?

THE MODERATOR: Halloween is right around the corner. You had a horror story. Okay, also it was your week off since KPMG, and we know how big you are with family. What did you do and who did you see social distanced?

DANIELLE KANG: I just actually spent a lot of time with my friends and my family. I just love being home, and there were things that I needed to tune up and just kind of regroup and restart. I didn't realize that the Drive On Championship was coming on so quickly. It was added on so late that I thought I had two weeks off.

Then all of a sudden on Wednesday I realize I have an outing and I have to fly. I as like, wait, it's coming up. It's been a rush, but I'm glad to be here.

THE MODERATOR: And a few moments ago we talked about the Inverness Club, and that's where we're going to have the Solheim Cup. Are you thinking at all about that as you finish the rest of 2020?

DANIELLE KANG: Most definitely. I think Solheim Cup is any American girl's dream that's a golfer. I can't wait to see 2021 how it's going to be plays at Inverness. Funny enough, like my caddie and the coaches have talked about how the golf course set up would be. They also ask for my input, what do you think about this hole. It's really fun to talk about, and just to be on the team itself is a great accomplishment and an honor.

THE MODERATOR: And we have a question from Ophelia Bunuel.

DANIELLE KANG: Hi.

OPHELIA BUNUEL: Hi, my name is Ophelia Bunuel, and I'm ten years old and from Girls Golf Miami. It's an honor for to get to speak with you. Happy belated birthday from Girls Golf Miami.

DANIELLE KANG: Thank you.



OPHELIA BUNUEL: For my first question, I would like to ask you during these difficult times, there is a lot of uncertainty. What drives you to push past that and continue to come out here and play? Why is it so important to you?

DANIELLE KANG: I believe that to keep pushing during this difficult time is important because it drives people. No pun intended, but we drive on. We keep moving forward. The fact that if I can be out there and doing what I do best and keep showing entertainment and giving hope, I think that's what sports around the world does. I think younger kids, I know that a lot of people can't go to school right now and they're stuck at home.

Wherever their quarantine might be, we just want to give hope. Just give them hope to keep driving on. That's the whole point. Girls like you who inspire us to keep going as well. Just to inspire the next generation, and for you guys to inspire the next generation after that. So thank you for being you and supporting Girls Golf.

OPHELIA BUNUEL: Thank you so much. Good luck this week.

DANIELLE KANG: Thank you. Bye, Ophelia.

THE MODERATOR: Ophelia is actually here this week.

DANIELLE KANG: Oh.

THE MODERATOR: So she will be watching the players and hopefully get to ask more questions in person.

DANIELLE KANG: Great. That's awesome. Come watch my group. I'm in the afternoon.

OPHELIA BUNUEL: I will.

THE MODERATOR: We also have a couple from Beth Ann.

Q. Happy birthday.

DANIELLE KANG: Thank you.

Q. What is your recollection -- Ophelia's question inspired me for this question. What was the first time you watched an LPGA tournament whether on TV or in person and kind of were captured by it?

DANIELLE KANG: What was the first time I ever watched a tournament?

Q. That you remember, yeah. Your first memory either in person going to an event or watching it on television.

DANIELLE KANG: Believe it or no, the Women's U.S. Open in 2007 would be the first event I ever watched or played in. I never watched an LPGA tournament. I actually, to be honest, never watched golf. It's not just LPGA, the PGA Tour as well. I never watched the Masters up to that point. I didn't know what a, quote, major championship was.

I was in a complete different sport that had nothing to do with golf. Yeah, so that would be the tournament that would've got me kind of in the momentum of playing golf.

Q. What do you think it was that captured, hooked you?

DANIELLE KANG: I don't think it actually hooked me that year. That was just my first recollection of golf, professional golf in general.

Q. Okay. Got you. Well, during this time of year you're typically going to Asia, and obviously had a lot of success playing in Asia. I'm just curious how important having this tournament with an off week before, how important it is to have this opportunity to compete?

DANIELLE KANG: It's definitely different than going to Asia competing here in Georgia. They're just two separate entities. It's basically -- I really like am so respectful and honored to the fact that this LPGA Drive On Championship is happening when we have this much time off.

Believe it or not, we would have four weeks off and it just -- we usually have a packed schedule in October, November, so in order to host this event and be able to compete during this time is incredible.

With said that, I'm very bummed out on the whole Asia tournament swing being canceled, but it is what it is with everything going on. We look forward to it and we talk about goals, and getting into the Asia events are a part of the challenge as well on the LPGA Tour. It's not a full-field event. It's limited. You have to make it to the top player's list. It's like an Invitational.

So it's like men's WGC. If you don't have them, you're kind of bummed out. But in hindsight or looking forward, I am excited to be here during in the time that we would've had off.

Q. My last one, Solheim related. Your reaction to the



news of the Ryder Cup and the Solheim Cup being back-to-back here in a couple years's time. What kind of opportunity do you think that will be for the women?

DANIELLE KANG: I think it's great. We have basically an opportunity to have two great fan-engaging tournaments in one month, and I think that's pretty awesome.

Q. Have you been to Spain?

DANIELLE KANG: No, actually have not.

THE MODERATOR: I have a couple. Just about we have been talking about this beautiful place. How has it been getting a practice round in and how has it been just visually to play golf next to these wonderful lakes?

DANIELLE KANG: I think I said it in interviews before when we don't have leaderboards I'm still not used to taking my phone out during practice rounds or tournaments, but I did yesterday because I had to take pictures. It was so beautiful. This morning, too. I should have been here two hours ago. I just walked in two minutes late because I was sitting on my patio eating brunch by myself, having a lake overlook.

So it's been pretty nice. It's very serene and I'm enjoying the kind of view and the vibe of this place. Relaxes you.

THE MODERATOR: My last question if no one less has any is this year has been really crazy, and you've talked about how you sort of reset. Just wondering what do you do when you want to t reset? Watch Netflix? Cook? Hang out with family and friends? What a little thing that you do that we haven't heard from you?

DANIELLE KANG: When I'm at home?

Q. Or maybe even in the hotel room when you want to reset.

DANIELLE KANG: I think in order for me to reset I have to be happy, and I do things that make me happy. Whether it's to talk to whoever it would be or if it's taking a walk around the lake, I just go do it. If it's taking a trip to a supermarket and going and buying hot Cheetos, that's what I do.

If I'm happy, I just feel like everything is okay even if things go wrong. It's been a really crazy year. A lot of emotions. Especially the way I've been playing it's up and down and it's a lot. Sometimes just have to take a moment just to have a self-check and go, Everything is okay.

THE MODERATOR: Have you tried Cheetos mac and

cheese?

DANIELLE KANG: No.

THE MODERATOR: Came out this year. That's been the huge thing on social media is Cheetos mac and cheese.

DANIELLE KANG: Oh, wow.

THE MODERATOR: Good luck this week.

DANIELLE KANG: Thanks.

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